



Early Years



Early Years Policy

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide a solid foundation for good future progress through school and life. The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of Year R.

"The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in all Early Years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind A **secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, assessing and reviewing what they have learnt regularly
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring every child is included and supported

The EYFS is based on four principles which shape the practice in Year R:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The EYFS covers the education and care of all children in Early Years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities"

(Department for Education 2021)

Aims and objectives of EYFS

The EYFS curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, facilitating, promoting and developing:

- Personal, Social and Emotional well-being
- Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- Social skills
- Listening and Attention skills
- Language and Communication
- Reading and Writing
- Mathematics
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development.

Teaching and learning style

Key features of effective EYFS teaching and learning in our school:

- teachers understand how children develop and learn; this is reflected in teaching
- range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication
- carefully planned curriculum and continuous provision which provide opportunities for children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are shared with parents and carers
- good relationships between our school and other educational settings which the children have previously attended
- clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it
- partnership between teachers and parents/carers help our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- regular identification of training needs for all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Learning through play in the Foundation Stage

Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

When planning and guiding children's activities, the Year R Team reflect on how the children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are;

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

We value the diversity of individuals in our school and believe that all of our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best and develop cultural capital by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. Realistic and challenging expectations are tailored to the needs of our children to help them achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Our careful and precise planning aims to meet the needs of all children including those with; Special Educational Needs, disabilities, all social and cultural backgrounds, different ethnic groups, those from diverse linguistic backgrounds and the more able.

Regular assessments of children's learning identify their needs and informs the Year R Team for future planning. Learning is personalised through:

- 'planning in the moment' opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a variety of teaching strategies based on the children's individual learning needs and styles
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued

- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping
- planning differentiated activities to meet the needs of all children
- monitoring children's progress, and providing support as appropriate.

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly, and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Expected level and achieving the Early Learning Goals.

Daily phonics using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds helps to build a solid foundation for children's Reading and Writing.

The EYFS Team makes full use of the classrooms, outdoor classroom, Environmental Area and playground ensuring that they can experience a wide range of activities throughout the year.

Assessment

The national Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is an assessment tool used by teachers to make judgements on the children's achievements within the Early Learning Goals, at the end of the Foundation Stage. The EYFS has 17 Early Learning Goals covered through 7 Areas of Learning. We make regular assessments of children's learning using this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation and recorded work.

During the first 6 weeks of the academic year in Year R, the teacher completes the government's, 'Reception Baseline Assessment' with children individually. Additionally, the Year R Team record and use observations which inform them of the children's starting points in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. These assessments are used to inform planning.

Each term, through ongoing observations, the teacher completes assessments and updates Learning Ladders, the School's assessment tool. At the end of the final term in Year R, a summary of the children's achievements against the ELGs is sent to the LA for analysis and shared with the child's next teacher.

Year R children have a Topic and a Phonics/Handwriting book which shows progression and also informs the Year R Team of next steps. Teacher Led Activities and individual progress is documented in each child's online learning journey.

Parents and carers receive an annual report that provides comments on progress. Final assessment of the EYFSP is completed in June, and copies are sent to parents and carers in early July.

The role of parents and carers

All parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents or carers about their child during Stay and Play sessions which take place the Summer Term prior to attending school in September
- meeting with children in small groups in the first two days of term to enable and encourage more personalised learning throughout the year
- inviting all parents and carers to an Induction meeting in the Summer Term before their child starts school
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress or individual concerns. Formal parent consultations take place in the Autumn and Spring Terms where the teacher and parent discuss the child's progress and individual Literacy, Maths and social targets. At the end of the academic year parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress
- giving children the opportunity to take two reading books home twice weekly from the beginning of the Autumn Term.
- inviting all parents to create a Tapestry account where they can see what their child has been learning at school as well as create their own observations.

Resources and the Learning Environment

The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, promotes and encourages a positive attitude to learning. Once a week, children spend Forest School exploring the School's Environmental Area, this experience supports children in all areas of development. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the resources and activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. The environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely in order to develop in the 7 Areas of Learning.

Glossary:

Cultural Capital: "is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare for their future success. It is about giving children the best possible start to their early education." (Early Years Inspection Handbook 2019)

Continuous Provision: "describes all the different provision areas which are available for the children to use every day. Within each of these areas there are a range of core resources that children can use all the time, throughout the whole year. Planning effectively for continuous provision is crucial and involves a consideration of classroom layout and resourcing that will enable staff to offer a breath of learning opportunities." (Early Excellence Centre for Inspirational Learning 2021)

Expected Level: children are expected to reach all 17 Early Learning Goals by the end of Year R.

Reception Baseline Assessment: "the purpose is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of Key Stage 2 can be created. It is clearly linked to the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. However, due to the length and nature of the baseline, not all areas of learning and development in the EYFS are assessed. The assessment consists of Mathematics tasks and Literacy, Communication and Language tasks" (Standards and Testing Agency 2020)

Chalfont St Peter Infant School

'Learning Together and Celebrating Success'

Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: September 2025

Caring Honest Creative Hardworking Respectful